

A Critique of the Emperor's Wardrobe

The Kinder Gentler Military: Can America's Gender-Neutral Fighting Force Still Win Wars by Stephanie Gutmann, New York: Scribner, 2000; 300 pages; \$25.00, Online \$17.50.

Stephanie Gutmann's hard-hitting analysis of the services in the wake of feminist reforms, Aberdeen, and Tailhook, will be read by many soldiers, but will never be discussed in professional development sessions nor will she be invited to speak on her views. Her book should be discussed around the Army, but her views are politically incorrect and thus will not get an open hearing. Gutmann answers the question she poses (can the kinder gentler military still win) simply — NO. She argues with passion and compelling logic a case built on sound research that the feminization of the military is fundamentally unsound. Gutmann argues that readiness in the armed forces has been sacrificed to a social agenda that is not in the least concerned with achieving military effectiveness.

Gutmann argues, in defiance of the feminist tradition, DACOWITS, and the U.S. Congress, that men and women are "different." Gutmann asserts that the idea of the sexes being equal is not the same as concluding that the sexes are identical. According to Gutmann, in order for the goals and aspirations of the feminists to be realized, one must believe that 18-year-old men and women are absolutely interchangeable in combat units. The evidence does not support this conclusion. Gutmann drives that point home with passion and conviction. In every facet of the military life, from ejection seats to fitness standards, the services have had to make extraordinary accommodations in order for women to be treated "equally." Gutmann notes that the result has been not equal standards, but rather the absence of standards. In short, no one fails. The unintended outcome of these accommodations is that equality is achieved at the expense of excellence. More seriously, Gutmann believes that adjusting physical standards may, in some cases, involve risk to the lives of soldiers in combat zones.

Gutmann contends that the pervasive nature of the attack on the essential qualities of soldiering amounts to the criminalization of the warrior spirit. Competition is suspended in favor of building self-confidence. Trainees who are challenged to the limits of their endurance, or rather what they perceive are the limits of their endurance, have only to say so and take a "training break." Gutmann reviews extensively the notorious Tailhook convention and concludes that the search for wrongdoing took on Stalinesque proportions. In short, we went far beyond punishing the guilty. Pilots who referred to the investigation

as "Witchhook" were, in her view, right. Gutmann argues that the zeal of the investigators of the debauchery at Tailhook had as much to do with the desire to attack the culture of soldiering as it did to eliminate inappropriate behaviors. This seems a stretch, but she marshals significant evidence that supports exactly this conclusion.

How did this happen? According to Gutmann, destruction of the military culture's rigorous standards and hard living stemmed from, "one of the 'ugliest trends of our time,' the split between 'elite' civilians and their military." The Vietnam War, draft deferments and anti-military feelings on campuses across the country produced this "split" by the mid-'70s. The elite and cognoscenti perceive that they have no stake in the military other than to "fix" it. The result is social experimentation that in the '90s pulled the fangs from our armed forces.

Other factors conspired to weaken the services against the forces of "reform." The end of the Cold War and the apparently antiseptic nature of combat in Desert Storm also played a role. The pundits and policy wonks have concluded that wars need no longer be the business of rugged, dirty young men killing each other at close quarters. It is a matter now of pushing buttons. In any case, they argue that large wars like Desert Storm will never occur again. According to this school of thought, no rational actor will take on the United States. If we have indeed arrived at the end of history, then the consequences of the reforms of the '90s, including same-sex basic training and persistent attacks on and revisions of the principle of combat exclusion, will not matter. But what if Desert Storm is not the end of history, and Kosovo is not the harbinger of a new kind of warfare?

The service chiefs and their civilian masters in the Department of Defense have contributed to the problem of congressional reform and persistent feminist attack by buckling with little resistance. Only Marine Commandant General Krulak, she asserts, had the courage to admit readiness problems and to argue that same-sex training did not make sense in terms of improving readiness. Krulak's Marine Corps asserted that the values of the Corps have stood the test of time and are for that reason immutable.

Having diagnosed the illness, Gutmann offers a prescription. Her solutions include: eliminating recruiting quotas for women, separating the sexes during basic training, enforcing firm, exclusive standards, and implementing MOS-specific qualifying tests. These and other solutions, including allowing dissenters to speak, would, according to Gutmann, transform the services from "...the corporation at its dreary, petty soul-killing

worst..." back to a service designed to work the nation's will. Her armed forces are about killing people and breaking stuff in the name of the United States. Finally, she would open any MOS to any person who can meet objective standards for that MOS.

Gutmann is strident and hard to take, but many of her conclusions have the ring of truth. For those of us who have made the transition from respecting women in the traditional sense to respecting women as soldiers, Gutmann's arguments, while persuasive, do not entirely persuade. Female soldiers have proven themselves despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary. Patriots of whatever race, creed, color, or sex should have the opportunity to serve if they are able. Gutmann's argument for objective standards does, however, make sense. If you are unable to carry the load, and cannot meet the physical requirements for a task, then you should not be afforded the illusion that you are competent and able. Objective standards, with all jobs open to all who are able to meet those standards, may be the way to bridge the gap between feminist political agendas and what individual young women may wish to attempt. Finally, failure, for all of us, should be possible or we will not value what we attain. Whether we have the courage to make mid-course corrections or even openly discuss the way we "man" — or is it "person" — the force remains to be seen.

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Into Cambodia: Spring Campaign, Summer Offensive, 1970 by Keith William Nolan, Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 1999 (paperback edition. Hardback first published in 1990); 451 pages; \$18.95.

Keith Nolan has written three other books on the Vietnam War; the best known are *Battle for Hue* and *Death Valley*. He approaches *Into Cambodia* with a desire to share the story of the men who fought and died in a little known portion of an unpopular war. He has created a soldier's story through the memories of hundreds of those who fought in Cambodia. It is the number of interviews conducted that makes this book a pleasure to read.

In the introduction, the author explains his desire to share this story. The focus in 1970 was on the political nature of the Vietnam War and the deaths of students at Kent State, rather than on the exploits of soldiers in the field. This is why the book is focused at the tactical level.

I began the book expecting a tutorial on geopolitics and an explanation of the behind-

closed-doors negotiations going on to create the Vietnamization that was the central strategic aspect of the American withdrawal. This was not the case. The book begins with stories about the lives of soldiers in the field and their daily struggles to stay alive and still accomplish their mission.

The author shows, through a series of anecdotes, the conflicting role the U.S. Army played in Vietnam in 1970. Everyone knew that America was leaving and no one wanted to be the last U.S. soldier killed in Vietnam. So they did their jobs in the bush, but without the bravado and energy that existed in 1965. From this demonstration of the murky situation that every soldier faced, the author continues the story by describing the reactions and then the action of attacking the North Vietnamese Army camps in the Cambodian-Vietnamese border area.

The author divides the book into sections, each section telling the story of a different unit. He talks about the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment; 1st Cavalry Division; 4th Infantry Division; 25th Infantry Division; 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division; and the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. For me this book was especially interesting, as I am currently assigned to the 11th ACR. The insight into the past of my own unit was an added bonus.

I enjoyed this book, not as someone interested in military history, but as someone interested in soldiers. The nature of the book — telling the story through the eyes of the privates, sergeants, and junior officers who fought the campaign — allows a person to see what went through their minds and what combat may be like. The author fills the book with stories about men like LT Cambria. His is a story of frustration from being denied the right to fire at fleeing NVA soldiers, because they had not fired on him first:

Cambria was frantic and his grunts were screaming from behind their gun shields, "We gotta fire! We can see 'em, we gotta fire!"

White knuckled as he gripped the handles of his .50-caliber machine gun in the track commander's cupola, thumbs on the butterfly trigger, Cambria looked into the dense underbrush that was now only fifty meters in front of them. His heart was pounding! To hell with the captain! Cambria was about to order his platoon to commence firing when the wall of jungle suddenly erupted with RPGs and RPDs and AK47s. There was a hellish explosion to Cambria's right and something slammed into his face like a fist as he instinctively pulled back on his .50-cal and saw everything blur at the vibrating recoil. (page 106)

This is a book that both history buffs and even those who are not interested in history will enjoy. It is also a great book for soldiers assigned to the units who participated, because it provides some very detailed accounts of the actions represented by the streamers on their unit colors. The book also describes the struggle and success of armored and mechanized forces in extremely

restricted terrain, making it of interest to all Armor/Cavalry leaders.

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How America Fought Its Wars: Military Strategy from the American Revolution to the Civil War by Victor Brooks and Robert Hohwald, Combined Publishing, Conshohocken, Pa., 1999; 489 pages; \$29.95 (hardcover).

Many books have been written on the events of the first century of American history. However, few contain the unique analysis of the battles, leaders, and outcomes that Victor Brooks and Robert Hohwald cover in this book. Brooks and Hohwald look closely at the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the U.S. Civil War. Each war is explored in great detail, with a final discussion on alternate strategies and outcomes, and their subsequent ripple effects through history. Additionally, their analysis of both the American Revolution and the U.S. Civil War contain evaluations of the key leaders, to include a grade for each general and supporting evidence to back their evaluations.

The authors first provide a chronological story of the wars' primary battles and campaigns, placing special weight on strategies and tactics. Then they analyze the impact of each event to illustrate its effects on American history. Finally, they discuss alternate strategies and outcomes, and emphasize the importance of those outcomes by showing how the United States would look under different circumstances. It is this analysis, along with the evaluation of the key leaders, that makes this book truly unique, and unquestionably fascinating.

How America Fought Its Wars does, however, fall short in one area. Brooks and Hohwald include only minimal maps to aid in the visualization of their descriptions. I found myself constantly searching for maps to help me to better comprehend their analyses. Inclusion of more maps, along with some charts and artwork, would turn this book into a true masterpiece; without those maps, the book never quite reached the clarity necessary in an analytical work.

Overall, *How America Fought Its Wars* is an informative and insightful look at the strategy and leadership of the first hundred years of American warfare. I recommend this book to any officer interested in that period of American history. Many tactical, strategic, and leadership lessons, on a theoretical level, can be learned from this book. The application of these lessons learned to the armor/cavalry community is limited, but still useful. I would definitely buy this book for my own professional library despite the lack of maps that limits the book's appeal.

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American Generalship by Edgar F. Puryear, Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 2000; 374 pages, extensive notes, index; \$34.95.

It's a bit difficult to be objective about a book on generalship when it has already been reviewed by numerous generals (some my personal friends) who wrote glowing accolades about it! After a second reading, however, I believe the accolades are well deserved; this is a fine book on an unusual subject.

Prof. Puryear wrote a well received earlier book, *Nineteen Stars*, about Generals Marshall, MacArthur, Eisenhower, and Patton. It got him to wondering what sets one man so apart from his peers that he is selected for general officer rank. Then he considers what further separates generals to the point where some rise to four-star rank. The author's research is remarkable; he interviewed over a thousand general officers, including over a hundred four-star generals, to learn from them what they believed led to their success.

In Puryear's opinion, it all boiled down to one thing: character. Then he found he couldn't define character adequately, so he set about describing, through anecdotal comments from his general officer sources, those things that reflected character as soldiers have come to understand that term. Each chapter in this book describes one such aspect of leadership: selflessness, the ability to make decisions, a willingness to challenge assertions and an aversion to "yes men," the importance of reading about other leaders, mentoring, consideration for others, an ability to define issues and delegate tasks, and the readiness to focus on problems rather than on placing blame. The text is replete with direct quotations of experiences from his sources, and it's interesting how many of our own experiences mirror these.

Two chapters are particularly important and should be read again and again as the reader advances in grade: decision-making and the importance of reading. Decision-making is the essence of leadership, at all levels of command, in peace as well as in war. How you absorb and evaluate the recommendations of your subordinates, how you reach a conclusion as to which action to follow, and how much you leave to your subordinates to decide are all critical parts of the decision-making process. General Marshall commented: "I must have assistants who will solve their own problems and tell me what they have done." That applies equally to company commanders and their platoon leaders. I used to tell my staff and commanders: "Don't bring me problems; I already have problems. Bring me solutions." This chapter shows how different leaders arrived at their decisions, and the thought processes they used. That's what makes this part especially useful.

The chapter on reading is also significant, first, because we tend to fill our days so full

of short-term objectives that we seldom take time to reflect on where we're going; and, second, because none of us can ever experience a broad spectrum of troop-leading and decision-making, and it helps to read about the varied experiences of others, how they were challenged, and how they resolved problems. This applies to all grades, not just generals. General Ridgway commented: "A man by himself can have but a very limited personal experience. So you've got to draw on the experience of others, both in reading and in talking...." General Bradley added: "You first study the theoretical handling of troops; you study the principles of war and principles of tactics and how certain leaders applied them. You are never going to meet with that exact situation, but when you know all these principles and how they were applied in the past, then when a situation faces you, you apply those principles to your present situation and hope you come up with a good solution."

One thing that keeps appearing through all the stories, although it is never emphasized, is opportunity. Eisenhower commented that the best way to learn how to make good decisions was to "Be around people making decisions." But not everyone gets such opportunities. Eisenhower himself ran afoul of the Infantry Branch Chief who refused to nominate him to CGSC. But Eisenhower had a mentor, General Fox Connor, who arranged a temporary transfer to the Adjutant General Corps that had a vacant nomination — a golden opportunity! Pershing, Eisenhower, Patton, Truscott, Ridgway, Shalikashvili, Shy Meyer, all comment on the advantage of timely opportunity, and Puryear notes in writing about Eisenhower: "It would be naive to deny that there was a certain element of luck involved in his success." Not every leader gets such opportunities, and not everyone who does will recognize them. So be aware, stay alert to what is happening around you, and when luck or whatever places that opportunity before you, seize it!

A final comment, especially for young leaders. General Shalikashvili said about this book: "Not a dry list of 'dos and don'ts' but a highly readable collection of experiences and thoughts of countless practitioners." A fine endorsement. Yet he gives a finer one on pages 230-231: "When I was first commissioned, I was assigned to Alaska and my platoon sergeant was a Sergeant Grice. Grice devoted his life to making me the best platoon leader around... I wish every second lieutenant could have a Sergeant Grice. He is the one who taught me what caring for my men really entailed. From him I learned that when I walked down the gun line and asked the soldiers some questions, that if I didn't know the answers better than the soldiers, they would see through me, whether I really knew what I was talking about or not. By the way, I learned that this is as true for a platoon leader or platoon sergeant as for a four-star general." Amen!

Yes, this is a fine book, interesting, readable, thoughtful, sometimes provoking and

challenging, full of insights on the essence of leadership. Get it, buy it, or borrow it, read it, read it again. And again!

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God's Children by Harold Coyle, Forge, February 2000; 316 pages; \$24.95, ISBN 0-312-86296-2.

Harold Coyle's fiction always seems to be one step ahead of actual military missions. In earlier books, Coyle foreshadowed U.S. military operations in the Middle East and wrote about how an armor campaign would be conducted. In *God's Children*, Coyle, a VMI graduate and former armor officer, writes of an Eastern European peacekeeping deployment in war-torn Slovakia and about a young officer's trials in accomplishing a confusing mission.

The novel is set in the near future, with U.S. forces six months into a NATO-led mission aimed at separating the ethnic Hungarian minority and the Slovak majority. The main characters are two lieutenants who struggle to conform to the responsibilities of command. First Lieutenant Nathan Dixon is an experienced young combat leader who is assigned to a patrol with Second Lieutenant Gerald Reider, a new platoon leader fresh out of West Point. While on the patrol, the conflict between the two warring parties erupts again, placing the peacekeeping force, and in particular the patrol, in a precarious position.

The plot is ripped from today's headlines. Coyle has written a great fictional account of what can go wrong when a peacekeeping mission has no clear objectives. The only fault is Coyle's framing of the Hungarian issue. Hungary is a member of NATO, and a mission into a nation that is conducting ethnic cleansing of Hungarian minorities would have serious ramifications in Brussels and Hungary. Coyle underplayed this aspect of the story.

God's Children is an excellent story about young leaders thrown into an unclear situation on the ground. I recommend this book because of the important message it tells about the need for clear and concise mission statements so young leaders, such as Coyle's characters, will understand what they are doing "over there."

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The Battle for Pusan by Addison Terry, Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 2000; 256 pages, maps, photos; \$27.95.

The 50th anniversary of a major historical event usually generates new materials and renewed interest in aspects of that event. So, hopefully this will continue to be the case with the Korean War of 1950-53. Major (Ret.) Addison Terry's personal memoir is that of

one of the first American soldiers to be committed in the summer of 1950, from July until he was wounded and evacuated back to the States in September. He wrote his account during recovery from his wounds at the Fort Benning Army hospital, while his recent experiences were still vivid. The manuscript was then packed with household goods as his family was transferred on numerous duty assignments, until it surfaced again in 1998 while he was disposing of old files in a barn on his Texas farm.

Commissioned as a second lieutenant through ROTC at Purdue University, Terry was assigned to B Battery, 49th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Division, part of the Army of Occupation in Japan. When the North Koreans invaded, he was reassigned and served as a forward observer with the 8th FA Battalion, supporting Lieutenant Colonel Mike Michaelis' 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Division. The 27th "Wolfhounds" were called on as a "fire brigade" to thwart the Communist NKPA thrusts, from Masan in the South to the "Bowling Alley" fronting Taegu, as General Walker's Eighth Army was forming the "Pusan Perimeter" along the Nakdong River line.

All units were at less than two-thirds TO&E strength, and Terry reflects the bitterness of the GIs over the "police action" and over Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson — later fired as a scapegoat by President Truman — who had "cut the fat" out of the military budget. As a result, FOs had to lay wire comms for their old EE8 telephones, the equally old SCR 610 radios didn't work, and the light WWII M24 Chaffee light tanks, early model bazookas (2.36"), and 57mm recoilless rifles couldn't stop the Russian-built T-34/85s. Rebuilt WWII medium Shermans shipped from Japan greatly encouraged the infantry, and in a counterattack to Sachon Pass (Chinju sector) these tanks generated great confidence, Terry says, to "kill gooks," slamming their rounds into the "NKs" on the hills from their 75s (actually 76mm on M4A3E8s) of the 8072d Medium Tank Battalion, incorporated into the 89th Medium Tank Battalion on 7 August. Ironically, the old narrow-tracked "Easy Eight" Shermans turned out to be better at negotiating steep mountain trails than the newer M26s and M46s. But in the "Bowling Alley," so named for the AP shell tracers and explosions echoing between the hill ranges, M26 Pershings (of C, 73d Tank Battalion), with their 90mm guns, smashed T-34s and self-propelled SU-76s.

Terry's book is filled with vivid and detailed accounts of an FO team working with line infantry — firing M2 carbines on full auto, calling in fire missions, GIs attacking with bayonets fixed, boiling coffee over Sterno chips, spooning C-ration fruit cocktail from aluminum canteen cups, taking his entrenching tool into the bushes, spreading a shelter half over his foxhole, climbing the leg-buckling hillsides, and running under fire ("My heart was beating so hard that it was making an echo in my helmet").

He also describes practices gained by experience, like firing an artillery concentration above the Reds on a steep hillside to start a rock avalanche, dragging NK dead with an ammo belt in case there was a live grenade or booby-trap beneath them and, in night-fighting, throwing grenades which would not reveal someone's position like an M1 muzzle blast would.

The book has appropriate photographs and sketch maps. This is a detailed and vivid account of front-line Korean combat. It reflects the price paid for lack of preparedness for war, yet also the professional satisfaction in stopping an enemy attack with a crushing TOT, the pride in a unit ably led in adversity, and the increasing confidence as new equipment and new units finally begin arriving to turn the tide of war.

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The T-34 Russian Battle Tank by Dr. Matthew Hughes and Dr. Chris Mann, published in their Weapons of War series by Spellmount Ltd., The Old Rectory, Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0AZ, England; hardback, 96 pages; retail \$17.95, Online \$12.57.

One of the world's classic tank designs, Russia's T-34 is rated as one of the best tanks of WWII, if not THE best. When the German army came into contact with them in 1941, it outclassed their tanks and anti-tank guns. It was even suggested that the faster way to counter it was to copy it. Aspects of the design are found in later generations of tanks, showing how great its influence was.

Beginning with a long but well-written account of Soviet tank development, tactical and strategic theories for their use, and the effects on both of Stalin's purges of the 1930s, this book describes the design of the T-34 in considerable detail, including the purchase of the American Christie design from which it was derived. The final design is described in detail, including some very good interior photos of vehicles sent to the then-Western Allies for evaluation. These are followed by accounts of it in action during WWII, from the early dark days of Operation Barbarossa through its progress as the tide turned, which saw it in action in Berlin. Design changes introduced on the way are covered as they happened, and another chapter describes post-1945 service, which shows that it was a potent vehicle for several years before it was eventually outclassed. Only the final chapter on marks and variants falls short of the standard of the rest of the book, being confused and mixing up matters while using the German identification system and yet calling it "British."

These accounts are supported by a well-chosen range of photos. Most have been

seen before, but they are well printed and include a rare good color photo showing tanks bogged in the early 1941 battles. Color coverage includes plans of a 1941 pattern T-34/76, cutaway of a T-34-85, and several side views showing typical camouflage schemes. Technical information tables complete a good study of this important tank. It may add little new to other books, but it is as good an account as can be fitted into a book of this length.

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Software

Close Combat: Battle of the Bulge, by Mindscape under the SSI label, est. \$39.99. (More information and demo download available at www.closecombat.com or www.ssionline.com)

System Requirements: P200 or faster, WIN 95/98, 32MB RAM, 60MB HD space, 4MB video card and 4X CD ROM. (Internet or network connection for head-to-head play.)

Reviewed On: PIII-500, WIN 98, 128 MB RAM, 32MB NVIDIA RIVA TNT2 graphics card and 40X CD ROM.

Close Combat: Battle of the Bulge is Mindscape's fourth and latest release in the highly popular series. This game is clearly worth a look. It has many features that will appeal to wargame enthusiasts (especially lovers of real-time strategy games) including a serious attempt to achieve historical accuracy, good visuals and sound, real-time decision-making, and a decent simulation of soldier behavior.

This chapter in the *Close Combat* story revolves around one of the most pivotal episodes in World War II, as the Germans take one last desperate gamble in the Ardennes. The Americans fight to buy time for reinforcements as the Germans attempt to break through. Unlike earlier titles, *Battle of the Bulge* adds a new strategic element that gives the player more opportunity to influence the larger picture. However, the game is still a simulation primarily designed to focus on small unit actions. The player must coordinate infantry, armor, and fire support assets to capture "victory flags" in and around small towns. Units maneuver through the countryside, occupy buildings, and fight from street-to-street to maintain the tactical advantage.

From the technical game play perspective, the designers of *Battle of the Bulge* did a pretty good job. The tutorial is a little sparse, but walks the player through each of the key aspects of the game. Setting up play is simple, with the option of fighting an individual battle or one of three campaigns. You can view forces and set competency levels before choosing to play either the U.S. or German side. (Realism settings are also avail-

able, but that would be a little too much like cheating!) During the game, players will be impressed with the outstanding sound effects and will enjoy most of the visuals. Game controls are relatively straightforward and simple to use. Orders are given to pre-designed units rather than individual soldiers, which makes the whole process manageable.

From the tactical perspective, *Battle of the Bulge* does a respectable job of rewarding the player for use of sound small unit tactics, techniques, and procedures. Establishing support by fire positions and concealing movement through the use of terrain and smoke are critical to success. Additionally, soldiers in each unit react to the stress of combat. Unlike other similar games where units follow orders without regard to the emotional reaction of the troops, this one takes that critical factor into account. Units that take a large number of casualties may hunker down and refuse to obey orders or, worse yet, leave the battlefield. Another feature that I particularly liked was the way the game represents and plays line of sight. A colored bar from gun-to-target identifies fields of fire as clear, partially obscured and blocked. Units can engage partially obscured targets, but at a reduced effectiveness; a realistic feature not reflected in many Army training simulators and devices.

Before pointing out the game's shortcomings, I must admit up front that I am not a big fan of real-time strategy games and haven't played any of the other games in the *Close Combat* series. First, while graphics are fairly impressive, the background/terrain and scale of the map both make locating units at a glance somewhat difficult. Second, *Battle of the Bulge* didn't do much to change my opinion about real-time games. It seemed that at any given time, the action was either too slow or too fast. Once my units made contact, I had a hard time effectively issuing orders and following message traffic. While I found this to be a problem, experienced players will probably not see this as a flaw, but will more likely consider it an accurate portrayal of combat. And although I didn't try the head-to-head option, this particular complaint might not apply in that mode, as both players would face the same difficulties and the actual fight would probably unfold at a slower pace. Lastly, the player doesn't have the option to build custom units, but I guess that's expected of any game that tries to maintain historical accuracy.

Disregarding my personal prejudices, this is a well-designed game with many attractive features. For those of you who like the "Command and Conquer" style of real-time strategy games and are interested in a more realistic historical military simulation, there's a good chance that *Close Combat: Battle of the Bulge* is the right game for you.

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